

Board of Animal Health offers unique experience for interns

Most students pursuing a degree in veterinary medicine seek out internships and job experiences in animal clinics—places where pets or livestock are examined or treated and cared for. The veterinary students who are interns for the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) have a very different experience that is unique to the veterinary industry.

During this program, students work alongside BOAH's veterinarians and animal health specialists gaining valuable experiences in regulatory veterinary medicine. Far from a typical clinical setting, BOAH veterinarians see animals or work on cases that have a serious disease or welfare issue.

"Regulatory veterinary medicine is different from working in a veterinary clinic where veterinarians care for ill animals and administer vaccines," said State Veterinarian Dr. Bret D. Marsh. "It is about policies and practices that protect public and animal health, the economy, the safe food supply, as well as animal welfare and disaster preparedness."

The internship program connects BOAH with future veterinary professionals and has become an important recruiting tool. Over the years BOAH has hired seven former interns into the agency.

A BOAH internship is unique in that students are exposed to a wide variety of animal industries, from pets to commercial livestock production, across the state as well as public health. During the internship each student is assigned a special project. They also gain opportunities few practicing veterinarians have, like helping with necropsies on cattle exposed to bovine



BOAH summer interns include Acacia Herr, Cody Schnur and Andrea Bruggeman.

tuberculosis (a rare, infectious disease of mammals). While that doesn't sound like a dream job for most of us, remember: these are veterinary students with a passion and curiosity about animal health.

BOAH Summer Interns

This summer, three students from Purdue University's College of Veterinary Medicine are participating in BOAH's internship program; they are: Acacia Herr, Cody Schnur and Andrea Bruggeman.

Acacia Herr is a third-year veterinary student from Warren, Indiana. Herr grew up on a commercial poultry operation where her family also raises sheep and other exhibition livestock. "The BOAH internship has given me a diverse experience where I have been exposed to regulatory medicine, public health and livestock industries throughout the state," said Herr. "My internship experiences have given me insight into why and how regulations are put into place."

Cody Schnur is a second-year veterinary student from Chrisney, Indiana. Schnur grew up on a farm with meat goats, sheep, beef cattle, poultry and horses. She has worked for a mixed-practice veterinarian for 6 years, gaining a wide variety of experiences in private practice. "This summer I have been exposed to more opportunities in veterinary medicine," said Schnur.

Andrea Bruggeman is a first-year veterinary student from Portland, Indiana. Bruggeman grew up on a commercial turkey operation where her family also grows crops and raised other livestock. "I applied for the internship with BOAH because I knew I would be able to get a variety of experiences in a short amount of time while building connections and learning more about the role of regulatory medicine," said Bruggeman.

In 2016, the state has 142 interns across 25 state agencies as part of the Governor's Public Service Summer Internship Program.